Building Local Capacity in Development Evaluation: Approaches Challenges and Opportunities

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Definitions

- **<u>Evaluation</u>** is the systematic collection and analysis of information about the characteristics and outcomes of programs and projects as a basis for judgments, to improve effectiveness, and/or inform decisions about current and future programming.

- **<u>Capacity Building</u>** is a process that improves the ability of a person, group, organization, or system to meet its objectives or to perform better
  - sustainable performance improvement through institutional leadership, management systems, and personnel skills improvement that will contribute to USAID's results and country-level impact.

Why is Local Evaluation Capacity Important?

- A credible and effective evaluation system is an important element for good governance

- Evaluation provides evidence for learning how development works

- Evaluation contributes to improved transparency and mutual accountability

Local Evaluation Capacity Challenges

- Limited accountability in business and government institutional culture

- Deficit of skills associated with evaluation

- Poor data quality, data systems, and evaluation standards

- Limited capacity to incorporate evaluation findings into decision making

How does Limited Capacity Reflect itself?

- Local evaluation capacity in developing countries is reflected in the limited

  - Ability to set the evaluation agenda
  - Ability to determine what is evaluated
  - Ability to determine what questions are asked
  - Ability to demand for evaluation
  - Ability to conducting evaluations
  - Ability to learn from and disseminate evaluation results

Why is Local Evaluation Capacity Limited?

- Few incentives to conduct evaluations
- Expensive
- Time consuming
- Technically complex
- Negative findings can be politically sensitive

Making Change

- Focus on the drivers of Local Evaluation Capacity Building

  - Ownership

  - Enabling Environment

  - Incentives

  - Leadership

  - Knowledge

Strengthening Local Capacity: QDDR

- Calls for strengthening local civil society and private sector capacity
  - Direct engagement with indigenous organizations by materially increasing the amount of total funding conveyed through direct local grants, and contracts

- Improving local capacity to conduct evaluations
  - fulfills commitments to country ownership
  - enhances learning at the local level
  - contributes to the effectiveness of USG supported development, diplomacy, and defense programs at the country-level

USAID Evaluation Policy

- Oriented toward reinforcing local capacity
  - Evaluations will be consistent with institutional aims of capacity building and respectful engagement with all partners

  - Evaluation specialists with appropriate expertise from partner countries, but not involved in project implementation, will lead and/or be included in evaluation teams

  - USAID will place priority within its sectoral programming on supporting partner government and civil society capacity to undertake evaluations and use the results generated

Framework for Building Local Capacity

- Professional Development
  - Strengthening knowledge and skills of individuals

- Resources and Support
  - Provide resources and support to sustain evaluation

- Organizational Environment
  - Support an enabling environment for evaluation

How should we Approach Local Evaluation Capacity Building?

- Partnerships

    - A model that bring together groups that include governments, international agencies, civil society, private sector representatives, into a formal, collaborative relationship dedicated to the pursuit of a shared goal
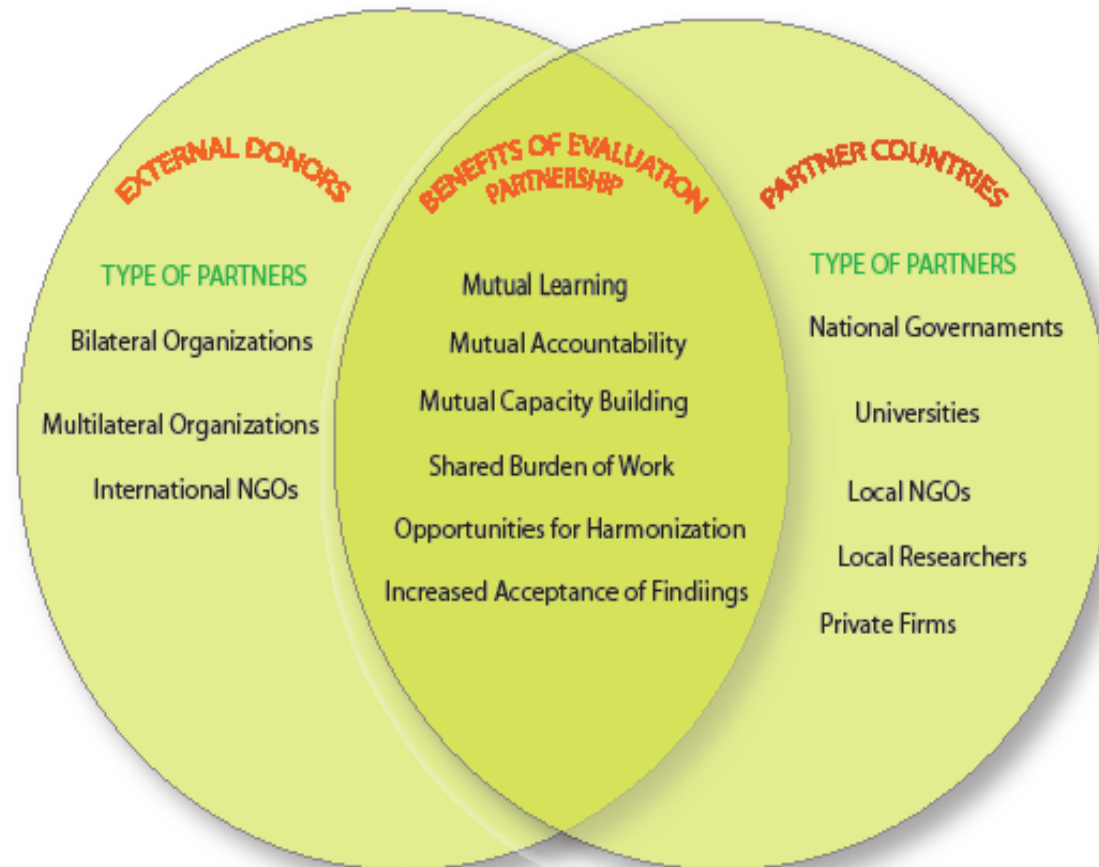
Why is Partnership Vital in Local Evaluation Capacity Building?

- Enhance effectiveness & efficiency

- Access to crucial resources - expertise & relationships that would otherwise be inaccessible

- Partnerships produce new knowledge to inform development – learning is a key benefit derived from partnership

- Enhance accountability

Benefits of Evaluation Partnerships

EXTERNAL DONORS

TYPE OF PARTNERS

Bilateral Organizations

Multilateral Organizations

International NGOs

BENEFITS OF EVALUATION PARTNERSHIP

Mutual Learning

Mutual Accountability

Mutual Capacity Building

Shared Burden of Work

Opportunities for Harmonization

Increased Acceptance of Findiings

PARTNER COUNTRIES

TYPE OF PARTNERS

National Governaments

Universities

Local NGOs

Local Researchers

Private Firms

Conclusion

- Increased partnerships between donors and public and private institutions, should be pursued, for building capacity to conduct evaluations and measure the impact of development, diplomacy, and development programs

- The capacity strengthening element of partnership has significant potential in creating an enabling environment for institutionalizing evaluation

Conclusion

- Partnerships with Universities and increased support for evaluation training at the Masters level is one approach towards increasing the pool of skilled program evaluators

- Efforts should be made to include local evaluators as members of evaluation teams supported by donor agencies
  - provide much needed hands on experience, skills transfer, and enhance the harmonization of tools and analytical techniques

Thank You

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